



DECEMBER  
2009

# It's CHRISTMAS Time!



How does your family celebrate? Do you put up a Christmas tree? Do you buy presents to remind you that Jesus is the greatest gift ever given to people? Maybe you make a special meal every year. Or maybe Aunt Martha is coming over to pinch your cheeks and tell you how big you're getting.

Does your family travel to another place at Christmastime? Do you know who else traveled on Christmas? Mary and Joseph! The next page of Sparkles will tell you a little more about their trip, but for now, talk to your mom or dad about the different things you do for Christmas. When you are done, draw a picture of something you do every year with your family on Christmas.



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# What Was the **First Christmas** Like?

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Maybe you travel a long way on Christmas morning to get to Grandpa's house or Cousin Betty's apartment. But did you know that on the very first Christmas, Mary and Joseph traveled almost 100 miles (around 160 km) to get from Nazareth to Bethlehem? Driving a car from Nazareth to Bethlehem only takes 2 hours – about how long your Awana club lasts. But walking to Bethlehem from Nazareth took many days. Not only that, but Mary was pregnant and about to have Jesus – it was extremely

hard for Mary to do any walking. Mary and Joseph were probably very tired when they finally arrived in Bethlehem.

When Mary and Joseph got to Bethlehem, every inn, and every other place to stay, were full of people. There was no room. Their feet might have been tired from all the walking. Finally, they found someone willing to let them stay in the barn in the back of his inn or house.

After Mary gave birth to Jesus, there wasn't a crib or bed where

she could put Him down for a nap. She put Him in a manger, which was where the animals' food was kept. Imagine that, God's Son, Jesus, sleeping in a dirty, smelly manger the night He was born.

This Christmas you may get a lot of new toys and games, maybe even some cool clothes. Or maybe you'll just get a few things that you need. Try not to think about what you get — instead think about the first Christmas. Mary and Joseph walked for days to Bethlehem because God had something BIG in store. He Promised a Savior would come from Bethlehem (Micah 5:2)! God was about to show the world who He was. Talk with a leader or your dad or mom about the very first Christmas. You might even want to read Luke 2 with your family. Jesus gave up heaven so He could come to earth and show you who God is. What a loving God!



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Help Mary  
and Joseph  
travel from  
Nazareth to  
Bethlehem!





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## Club Announcements & Fun Stuff



Awana Is On Break For Christmas. Awana Will Resume On Wednesday, January 6th @ 6 PM.

For Those Of You Involved In The Christmas Play, Dress Rehearsal Is Friday, December 11th @ 7 PM (Fellowship With Cookies, Hot Chocolate & More Will Follow At The Parsonage) & Saturday, December 12th @ 5 PM (Supper Will Be Served @ 5 PM In The FLC). See Jamey For More Info.



*Dress Rehearsal*



The Christmas Play Will Be Sunday, December 13th During The Morning Service. Those Involved Please Meet In The FLC @ 9:45 AM To Dress. You Have All Done A Wonderful Job And I Know It Will Be Great!

Don't Forget Our Christmas Party. Ask Your Parents To Bring Food For The Supper (Meats, Sides, Desserts & Drinks: Enough For Your Family Plus One More). Santa Will Be Here So Bring Your Christmas List & Camera.



*Christmas Party  
With Santa*



Join Us for  
Caroling

Sunday,  
December 20th @  
4 PM. Join Us As  
We Always Have  
A Great Time.

Thursday,  
December 31st.  
Supper Begins  
@ 8:30 PM.  
Service Begins  
@ 10 PM. Don't  
Miss It!

